

The Avery Coonley School

Magazine

Spring 2020



Annual Report 2018–2019

The Avery Coonley School

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Our Philosophy

We believe that the joy and excitement of learning must begin early in life. We place a high premium on developing the desire in our students to become critical thinkers and independent, life-long learners.

We assist our students in realizing their intellectual, emotional, social, creative, and physical potential by promoting academic achievement, character development, self-reliance, self-confidence, independent thought, and personal fitness.

We recognize and are sensitive to the unique needs of gifted children. Within a traditional structure, we provide acceleration and enrichment, and foster a supportive atmosphere that provides opportunities for creativity, problem-solving, and risk-taking.

We believe that diversity is the foundation for a strong, competent, and compassionate community. Therefore, we value racial, religious, economic, and cultural diversity in our student body, faculty, and staff.

We strive to build a community that encourages understanding and mutual respect and nurtures appreciation of the individual, civility, gratitude, honesty, kindness and consideration, responsibility, and volunteerism.

Mission Statement

The Avery Coonley School is an independent school whose mission is to provide a learning environment that is appropriate both for academically bright and gifted children who are motivated to learn and have demonstrated the potential for the scholastic achievement necessary to succeed in a challenging academic program, in order that they may become positive, productive, and respectful members of society.

Cover: Students explore the new Outdoor Challenge Course made possible by donor support at the 2019 Annual Auction.

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From the Head of School and Board of Trustees



Dear Friends,

We are pleased to share the ACS Magazine and 2018-2019 Annual Report. This issue was close to completion just before our country was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Like you, ACS was suddenly faced with a new and unexpected challenge. In the following pages, you will see stories that highlight the past school year, as well as how the ACS community has come together in the face of incredibly challenging circumstances this year.

This past year yet again reflects the generous spirit and commitment of the ACS community to ensuring the financial well-being of this great institution. Both our Annual Fund efforts and our Annual Spring Auction were highly successful, raising more than \$640,000 towards our operating costs. Given the size of our school, this is an impressive total and speaks highly of the role ACS plays in the lives of our families. The generosity and support of our community allows us to fulfill the mission of ACS, which is to provide the best possible environment for gifted students to thrive.

During the course of the 2018-2019 School year, many of our decisions and plans were guided by our new Strategic Plan 2018. The “planning to plan” stages included: Laying the groundwork for the launching of our new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council, scheduled for this spring; Initiating a new partnership with Northwestern University’s Center for Talent Development, which commences this summer; and introducing a brand new program for students called Design Thursday, which offers classes that enrich the current curriculum experiences for our students, while providing in-depth, consistent professional development opportunities for our teachers. We are continuing to explore ways to enhance the educational experiences for our gifted population as well as to deepen the pool of qualified applicants who want to join the ACS community. By increasing the resources needed to succeed, we are able to launch the kind of initiatives that both attract new families and better serve current students. Last year’s introduction of the partnership with TinkRworks and a new Makerspace is one example of our strategic plan aligning with our goal of providing excellence in all we do for our students; hence our partnership has grown to include more options with TinkRworks during our summer camp program as well.

As you read our Annual Report, you will see we are very mindful of the costs of sending a child to Avery Coonley. Our operating budget reflects fiscal responsibility and resources committed to providing the best faculty and staff possible, and paying close attention to maintaining and improving the physical landscape, classrooms, and equipment our students need and deserve. From new signage to beautiful acreage, the ACS campus represents the excellence of our student body and staff, and we remain grateful for all you do in support of Queene Ferry and her vision of education.

With deep appreciation and thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brendan Sheehy".

Brendan Sheehy, Chair, Board of Trustees

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Druzinsky".

Paul Druzinsky, Head of School



Educating both
*Mind &
Body*



by Michi Trota '92

The installation of an Outdoor Challenge Course at the start of the 2019-2020 school year was made possible by generous donor support at the 2019 Annual Auction and the efforts of our Physical Education faculty and Maintenance staff. The course elements provide our students and community with unique opportunities to connect with one another through initiatives involving trust, communication, and problem solving. This new program supports the ACS commitment to educating both the minds and bodies of our students. P.E. Teacher and Department Chair Adam Metcalf and Group 3 Teacher Jessica Kuczkowski share their thoughts about how the Outdoor Challenge Course and the related trainings they have received have influenced the school so far.



(top) Faculty and staff are trained and certified to lead groups on the Outdoor Challenge Course. (below) Students explore one of the course elements.



Students work as a team to move across the course.

What was your original vision for adding the Outdoor Challenge Course to ACS?

Adam Metcalf: We already used the area for low ropes team building. The vision was to put in permanent, more advanced structures that would challenge our students to practice connecting, critical thinking, and perseverance in a natural environment. I also wanted the area to have elements of a nature playground for exploration and unstructured play.

The course was intended to be used by other classes outside of P.E. How have you used the course with your students?

Jessica Kuczkowski: When we originally used the course, we used it before we went to Camp Edwards as an introduction to team-building, problem solving, and communication building. While we did not use the physical course itself, Jennifer Vaughan and I used the concepts from our outdoor course training experience to help our students develop trust, leadership, and practice problem solving.

What do you think the course adds to our curriculum and offers students?

AM: My main goal is to establish a safe environment for the students to gain confidence in their own abilities and discover the value of "the group" being stronger than the sum of its parts. Crafting and sequencing these experiences will allow relationships and interpersonal skills to strengthen, thus preparing our students with a sense of connection and belonging that will serve them well for the rest of their lives.

How have you seen students respond to the challenges inspired by the course?

JK: In one activity students worked in pairs to brainstorm what they value most about our classroom community. Each value generated was then written on a paper plate. At the Outdoor Challenge Course, the students were required to use the paper plates as "stepping stones" to travel as a group from one area of the course to another. It took a lot of effort and positive struggle for the students to get from Point A to Point B successfully, but they persevered. For Group 3 students, it can be difficult to think about the group as a whole and not just self. This activity encouraged them to work together and think of the group first rather than themselves.

Another activity required all students in the class to stand together on top of a box that had limited surface area. Lots of communication was required by the students to ensure that everyone fit on the box, and that the box remained balanced with no one falling off of it. After successfully completing this task, they were challenged to accomplish the same with smaller boxes.

Both of these activities provided a foundation for the Camp Edwards trip. The students loved the activities. They liked being outside, moving, and practicing valuable cooperative skills. Although the Outdoor Challenge Course was not yet complete, these activities were a great way to introduce the students to the kinds of experiences they can look forward to in the future once the course is complete. I think that this course and the activities it will provide have great potential. I cannot wait to further develop similar learning opportunities for the students in Group 3 in this outdoor space.

How has the course benefited team-building among faculty and staff?

AM: For the faculty and staff that has been trained on it, it was fantastic! We were able to try several of the elements and activities along with some extensions and modifications. We left with a greater appreciation for each other and had a blast. It is my hope to facilitate more team building experiences on the challenge course when weather permits.

Special thanks to the donors listed on page 44 for their contributions to the Outdoor Challenge Course!



Strengthening *Our Identity*

by *Rebecca Malotke-Meslin,*
Director of Enrollment and Financial Aid

In November 2018, The Avery Coonley School released its Strategic Plan: Inspiring Excellence. Eighteen months in the making, this living document will guide ACS through the next five years of decision-making, and shape the next chapter of our School's history. The plan outlines four main strategic goals:

- ♦ Deepen Our Commitment to Our Gifted Mission and Program
- ♦ Strengthen Our Identity as a Diverse, Inclusive and Multicultural School Community
- ♦ Expand Our Platform of Programs, Partnerships, and Expertise
- ♦ Enhance Our Long Term Financial Sustainability

ACS Board of Trustees and the School's administration are working side-by-side to maintain momentum towards meeting the Strategic Plan's outlined goals. Within each goal are more specific objectives to define the scope of the plan further.

As an example, as part of Goal #2, the Strategic Plan seeks to "expand our outreach to currently underrepresented populations, including Black and Latinx families," as well as "expand access to families of diverse socioeconomic status." These goals will require consideration of our marketing materials, Financial Aid budgets, and outreach initiatives. Before redesigning our current initiatives, we must first engage the voices of individuals within our ACS community and who are also a part of those underrepresented populations.

In order to cultivate thoughtful and authentic conversations, The Avery Coonley School is excited to announce the creation of a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Council. The Council's primary purpose is to provide oversight of the School's diversity goals and provide input and guidance to achieve the goals. Additionally, the Council will provide insight on issues of DEI, and also advocate for members of our diverse population. Part of the Council's work is the creation of Affinity Groups (separate to the DEI Council).

The Affinity Groups seek to create a community within ACS associated with a particular demographic. Affinity Groups will organize events, gatherings, and assist with outreach to the community outside of ACS. These events might include guest speakers, panels, movie screenings, etc. to raise awareness about issues of DEI at ACS. Affinity Group leaders will serve as liaisons to the Council. At this stage, we will focus first on establishing the DEI Council, then work to create Affinity Groups.

The Council will include representatives from all constituency groups: Parents, Trustees, Faculty, Staff, Alumni, External Experts. The School recently posted a call for nominations and will announce the Council's members and leadership in the Spring of 2020.

Each step we take towards creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment at ACS will improve the learning experience for all of our students. We are excited at the possibilities the DEI Council and Affinity Groups will create for our community and look forward to strengthening our identity together.

Any questions about Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion at The Avery Coonley School may be sent to DEI@averycoonley.org.

The ACS Debate Club was formed at the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year and quickly became an engaging and vibrant community for ACS Middle School students. Debating teaches students to read critically, think quickly, and improves students' public speaking. The Debate Club provides a formal structure in which to practice these skills, approaching debate as a form of verbal chess. Students in Groups 5-8 divide into two-person teams and use research, logic, and persuasion to support one side of an argument. Students are encouraged to come out and hone their reasoning and argumentation skills in a fun and friendly environment. Debate club is led by Literacy Teacher Mr. Eric Youngquist and meets every Wednesday afternoon from August through March. Mr. Youngquist took a few moments to share his experience and observations about Debate Club since its inception.

How did you become involved with the formation of the Debate Club?

When I joined ACS, Mr. Druzinsky asked if I would want to run the nascent Debate Club that was being formed. The board, parents, and administration had heard about the program and investigated the Illinois Middle School Debate League the previous year. I, of course, jumped on the chance. Debate is the ultimate game of verbal chess. Every attack needs to be countered by logic and research. I have loved every minute of it.

Tournament preparation is one part of club activities, but what are other aspects of debate that students focus on?

Every aspect that we practice will help the students in a tournament. We only skirmish (compete against each other) one or two weeks out from the tournament. The rest of the time is spent doing research and preparing cards (JV team) plus learning the basics of debate and whatever new case can be run at the next tournament (Novice team).

The ACS debate team competes in a kind of debate called policy debate. Policy debate focuses on whether or not the US should adopt a change in a policy of the United States Government. It relies heavily on evidence—articles from reliable sources that contain information to support the students' assertions. Two teams (of 1-2 students each) will debate the issue over several rounds—reading evidence from cards, questioning each other, and rebutting their opponent's evidence. Teams compete at either the novice (first year debaters), Junior Varsity (JV, second year debaters) or Varsity (3+ years) level. We currently have no varsity debaters since it is our second year.

At the beginning of the year, everyone is given the same set of arguments and rebuttals. These are the core files. Everyone uses them to debate. The novice teams learn the cases one at a time, with a new one being introduced at every tournament. They end the year being able to research and replace some of the core file evidence with new evidence from their research (while maintaining the same general argument).

JV and Varsity go through the core files within the first two tournaments, and are then able to write a whole new argument as a school. They can also introduce as many new rebuttal arguments as they would like. There are four regular season tournaments, a conference tournament, and a state tournament (IMSDL vs the Chicago Debate League).

What are some of the skills and experiences students gain from Debate Club?

Students gain several skills through their participation in Debate Club:

- An understanding of current events: Each year, the topic (resolution) is voted on by the high school debate coaches, and must be something of national or international importance. Last year's topic was immigration reform. This year was foreign arms sales and next year is judicial reform.

Engaging Students *in* Debate

*An interview with Literacy Teacher
and Debate Sponsor, Mr. Eric Youngquist*

In order to run the topic, you need some basic background, followed by an in-depth reading of several possible courses of action to address the resolution. Students need to pay attention to these topics in the news because they can add their own knowledge to the argument.

♦ How to research and write an argument:

From their second year on, the school can write their own resolution and files to attack other resolutions. This requires hours of research and assembling that research into logical formats that address the underlying issues, what effects different actions will have on it, and how it will affect the nation and the world.

♦ How to read critically: Students need to be able to read the files to look for strengths and weaknesses, then base their case around them. Debaters search for the flaws in the arguments and then turn them against their opponent.

♦ How to work as a team: Debaters have a partner that they rely on to split the work and bolster their efforts. Successful teams manage each other's time, take notes, prepare arguments and questions together, and monitor their partner's speaking to make sure they don't drop an argument while speaking. This extends to the whole team because everyone is expected to share research, good questions, and to prepare by skirmishing against each other.

♦ Development of good public speaking skills: This is one of the most critical skills in my book. Students get used to speaking in front of others and learn to speak with confidence. This is a huge difference in the speaking skills of a student just starting out in debate and the way a second year debater ends their season. The assertiveness and in their voices and the way they carry themselves is completely different.

♦ An ability to improvise and think on their feet: Walking into a debate round means walking into the unknown.



The 2018-2019 Debate Team

You know the topic and have a vague idea of what they are going to argue, but you never know how it will end. The JV level debaters have six possible cases they can run this year, 10+ possible counter arguments, plus the ability to add on to their arguments with outside research; no debate is ever the same. You have to learn how to quickly adapt to a new line of attack or seize on any weakness an opponent shows in their case.

How have you seen students use what they've learned outside of Debate Club?

The biggest change I have seen is in oral presentations and group discussions. The students have put all of their speaking skills (projection, inflection, organization) to good use.

What are some unexpected and rewarding experiences that you've had since the club was formed?

The teamwork aspect has been huge. Some good friendships have developed between teammates and the team as a whole. I have also really enjoyed the looks on the students' faces when their name is called for an award. There is nothing like the look of joy and triumph on a face after a particularly hard fought tournament.

Another would be just the general level of the students and their ability to operate on their own. After handing the students a dense 20+ page debate file with articles taken from academic journals, my JV students proceeded to explain all of the ways the argument didn't hold together, including several contradictions and fallacies. I didn't have to explain anything.



Finding Strength & Resiliency *in eLearning*

*by Rachel Bucek,
Marketing and Communications Assistant*

This year, schools around the country were faced with a new and unexpected challenge. In February, the U.S. President and the Governor of Illinois issued a stay-at-home order due to the quickly escalating COVID-19 pandemic. We followed those directives to prioritize the health and safety of our staff and families, and temporarily closed our physical campus on March 16th. However, as the situation began to worsen, Governor Pritzker extended all school closures through the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

When concerns began to arise in February, the closure of school was immediate, as was our transition to eLearning. Teachers and Administrators, with the support of the School's Technology Team, worked quickly to adapt to this new teaching and work style. While daunting at times,

we found excitement in eLearning by discovering interactive and creative tools such as Zoom, Flip Grid, Padlet, Seesaw and more that allowed us to connect and support each other during this time. Whether we call it eLearning, remote learning, distance learning, or virtual classrooms, it all refers to the same concept. Students and teachers engaging in the learning process without a shared physical classroom. What seemed impossible only a few short years ago, was suddenly the new normal.

After the initial launch, teachers worked tirelessly to reinvent their curriculum, determined to continue intellectual growth and curiosity in our students, while also providing them with a sense of cohesiveness. Students and teachers adapted to eLearning through virtual classrooms (synchronous learning) and recorded message, stories, and instruction (asynchronous learning).

Faculty and staff also embraced the changes that came with eLearning but looked for unique ways to bring hope and motivation to their students. Social Emotional Learning or SEL would become more important than ever. Faculty work to connect with students who are feeling increasingly disconnected, who miss their friends, who are missing some of their favorite extracurricular school activities such as Chess, Band, Chorus, PE, even lunchtime. Counselors Meghan McCarthy and Angel Van Howe have been sending regular communications to help guide parents through the struggles of parenting and addressing the specific needs of gifted learners.



Our teachers worked hard and seized every opportunity to transform their virtual classrooms into positive and engaging learning environments. For example, Drama Teacher Mr. Jeff Westbrook carried on with his lessons teaching pantomimes to Group 5 students, only this time, students used their school-issued laptops to record their practice and share it with classmates. He, along with Mrs. Barbara Cosentino, also coordinated an ode to Group 8 performing “You are my Sunshine” with the musical stylings of Mrs. Surdynski, Mr. Pawalek, Ms. Hurdle, Mr. Dundek, and Mr. Metcalf to inspire our graduates who are missing some memorable moments in their final year at ACS.

Our Athletic Director and P.E. teacher, Mr. Joe Schallmoser, knew that student spirits and physical activity might be low. He began delivering “Burpees and Bad Dad Jokes” to students across Chicagoland. He traveled more than 500 miles, visiting more than 100 students to provide exercise and laughter to improve mental and physical health. All at a safe distance, of course. Additionally, Mrs. Neha Thakkar, Learning Resource and Media Specialist, never missed a beat when it came to her students interested in learning by hosting a virtual author visit from K-Fai Steele. These practices, amongst many others, transformed the eLearning experience for our students from a scary and uncertain experience into an adventure.



Students experience joy at home through virtual classrooms and eLearning.



Soon-to-be ACS alumni are surprised with yard signs. (top) John "Jack" Geary '20 (bottom) Mahi Shah '20 (right) with sister Mili Shah '15 (left)

Teachers and staff encountered no shortage of trouble: spotty wi-fi, computers on the fritz, login issues, password changes, timing conflicts and more. So far, nothing has stopped us in moving forward as a community to meet the needs of our students. The positive responses and appreciation we received from parents during this time was overwhelming. Watching our community come together in support of one another is something we will never forget.

Parents expressed their concern and care for our teachers during this tough transition, "While the teachers continuously work with our students to strike a balance, we as parents want to give permission to the teachers to find some balance for themselves in all of this. With several more weeks of the school year to go, please pass along our concerns, thoughts, and thanks. ACS is truly a unique community."

Acknowledging the difficulty faced by parents, students, and teachers is necessary to work through this uncertain time. We heard from another parent who reminded us that "Learning to be flexible and adapt to situations is a skill that is invaluable to these children later in life."

We strive for a true partnership between parents and teachers. That relationship has never been more important. Teachers relying on parents to provide real-time support to kids, and parents relying on teachers to reimagine curriculum for a virtual world and be present for their students. Likewise, the Administrative Leadership Team, the Board of Trustees, the Tech Team and all the faculty and staff have banded together in support of students, our mission to serve gifted children, and our desire to provide quality education in the face of incredibly challenging circumstances. We have every confidence our community will come out of this stronger and more resilient.

Ways to Support ACS Students

Earlier this year, the ACS COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Fund was created to provide financial assistance to ensure that every ACS student will be able to return for the 2020-2021 school year, despite financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more at www.averycoonley.org/donations.

Sharing your gifts of time, expertise, and financial resources enables the School to provide a transformative experience for students and helps ACS continue to be one of the nation's finest independent elementary schools.

Consider making a gift today to support ACS students and the School!



*Thank you
to the ACS community
for your support.*

Online

Visit www.averycoonley.org/donations to make a gift or to learn more about the COVID-19 Fund, the ACS Fund, and other funds in support of ACS.

Cash Gifts

We accept gifts of cash and checks made payable to Avery Coonley School.

Gifts of Securities or Wire Transfers

To make a gift of securities or wire transfer, please notify Carolyn Johnson, Director of Development, at 630.969.0800 x7218 or development@averycoonley.org.

Matching Gifts

Many employers will double or even triple the impact of their employees' philanthropic giving through matching gift programs. Contact your human resources department to find out if you qualify.

Honor and Memorial Gifts

A friend or loved one may be honored through a gift to the Avery Coonley School. Along with your gift, include the name and address of the person whom you are honoring or relatives to be notified of the gift.

Planned Giving

Contact Carolyn Johnson, Director of Development, at 630.969.0800 x7218 or development@averycoonley.org about including The Avery Coonley School in your estate plans.

The Avery Coonley School is an IRS approved 501c3 tax-exempt organization. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law and are gratefully received. Our Federal Identification Number (EIN) is 36-2171680. Your gift will be acknowledged with a letter and receipt for your tax records.



Go Green with the ACS Magazine

Help ACS go green! In effort to continue our green initiatives, future editions of the ACS Magazine and Annual Report will now be sent via email and will be available to view online at www.averycoonley.org.

Tell us how you want to stay in touch! To ensure you receive an electronic copy, or if you prefer the ACS magazine mailed to you in print form, please return the enclosed envelope to update your preferences. You can also indicate your communication preference and confirm your contact information online by visiting www.averycoonley.org/StayConnected.

If you have a current student and need to update your contact information, please contact Mrs. Angela Tufo, Front Desk Receptionist, at 630-969-0800 or atufo@averycoonley.org.



Alumni gather after the Thanksgiving Work Party.

*As a member
of the alumni family,
you will always have a place
→ at ACS!*

Alumni Council and Alumni Relations

Alumni Council

The ACS Alumni Council connects alumni to each other and to the school through various programs and activities. As the alumni leaders at ACS, the Alumni Council acts as a voice for the alumni community. Meetings are held quarterly with an option to participate remotely.

Regional events

Help plan a local or regional alumni gathering near you. Planning assistance is always welcome!

Class agents

Class agents keep class spirit alive by making their class aware of upcoming alumni events, sharing classmate news, and assisting in updating alumni contact information.

Guest speaker

Would you like to return to campus to share your professional or academic insights? ACS has opportunities for guest speakers, including panel and Skype opportunities.

Stay connected

Update your email and mailing address to receive news from ACS. Follow ACS on social media to see what's happening at the school!

Make a gift

Your donation will help ACS continue to ensure accessibility for future students. Please consider making a gift today.

Interested in getting involved or have an idea to share? Contact Barbara Cosentino, Alumni Relations at bcosentino@avery-coonley.org or 630.969.0800 x7220.

Class of 2019

Congratulations and best wishes to our newest ACS alumni – the Class of 2019!

Members of this class are attending the following high schools:

Class of 2019 High School Choices

*Benet Academy
Choate Rosemary Hall (CT)
Downers Grove North High School
Fenwick High School
Glenbard South High School
Groton School (MA)
Hinsdale Central High School
Lake Forest Academy
Latin School of Chicago
Lemont High School
Lyons Township High School
Naperville Central High School
Naperville North High School
Providence Catholic High School
St. Ignatius College Prep
St. Paul's School (NH)
Phillips Academy Andover (MA)
York High School*



The Class of 2019 (top) and Class of 2015.

Class of 2015

Congratulations to the ACS Class of 2015 on their high school graduations and best of luck on their future journeys! Members of the class matriculated to the following colleges and universities:

Class of 2015 College Choices

*Boston College
Bowdoin College
Case Western Reserve University
Colorado College
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Emory University
Hamilton College
Haverford College
Indiana University
Loyola Marymount University
Northwestern University*

*Notre Dame University
Otterbein University
Purdue University
Smith College
Tulane University
University of Chicago
University of Illinois
University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
University of Wisconsin - Madison
Wake Forest University
Williams College
Wellesley College*

2019 All Class Reunion

Over 100 alumni and friends returned to ACS in September to participate in the 2019 All-Class Reunion. The event offered various activities, including a Friday night event at Pinstripes, the Saturday Family Fun Run and Breakfast with the Alumni Council, the tree rededication in honor of former faculty member Mr. George Ray, and a Saturday evening dinner event. Throughout the weekend, alums caught up with one another, explored the campus, and reconnected with former classmates, teachers, and the ACS community.

One of the highlights of the event was the presentation of the “Distinguished Alumni Award,” which recognizes and honors those alumni who demonstrate outstanding leadership or service to the local, national or global community beyond. The Alumni Council was proud to present this award to Chris Agos ’86, actor, author and founding President of the ACS Alumni Council. Throughout the years, Chris has given his time, energy and enthusiasm to ACS, including time spent as a mentor to students. He noted why he has always been so fond of the school in his acceptance speech: “Every time I walk on this campus, I feel as if I’m home.”



ACS would like to thank members of the Alumni Council, class agents, and other volunteers and staff whose hard work and dedication created a truly memorable event for everyone.

Special thanks to the following Alumni Council members (past and present):

Shilpa Gokhale '94
Alumni Council President

Jessica Bollow '05
Anathea Carrigan '18
Matt Cook '05
Ginny Corrinet, Retired Faculty
Nancy Doris '91
Maddie Flynn '16
Shannon Horn '06
Patricia Huebner, Retired Staff Member
Maria Kerhulas, Retired Faculty
Dawn Lawler '82
Anna Lenhardt, Middle School Head
R.J. Lopez '95
Carissa (Angerhofer) Means '89
Shilpa Rupani '99
Angela Solis '04
Brittany Thompson '01
Michi Trota '92

We hope to see you at the next
All-Class Reunion in 2022!



“It was great to see so many ACS alumni and their families participate in the reunion! Whether it was coming to Pinstripes, attending Fun Run, or joining us for the Saturday evening award presentation and dinner, the Alumni Council was thrilled to engage with alums throughout the weekend. We hope to build on this year’s event in the future, and we ask for our alumni to continue their support of ACS!”

Shilpa Gokhale '94



"What made the reunion so much fun for me was getting to see people from so many classes. I was reintroduced to people from my childhood that I may not have otherwise remembered. It was then so interesting to hear stories from other classes and see people's reactions to the new parts of campus. Everyone had a different aspect of campus that they wanted to find to see how or if it had changed."

Carissa (Angerhofer) Means '89



Alumni News

We love to hear what our alumni are doing! Please visit the Alumni portion of our website www.averycoonley.org and register; you will be able to post updates and see news and photos from your classmates and friends. You can also contact Barbara Cosentino, Alumni Relations at bcosentino@averycoonley.org or 630.969.0800 x7220.



Chris '86 and Patricia Agos

1944

Jorie Butler Kent was honored for her commitment to conservation by the Prince of Wales at a reception held at Clarence House. Friends of Conservation was founded by Geoffrey Kent and Jorie Butler Kent in 1982 to work to protect endangered wildlife and their habitats.

1973

Retired IL state Rep. Suzanne Deuchler, mother of **Maryll Moon**, was honored in 2017 by having the interchange at Orchard Road on Interstate 88 in Aurora named after her. Rep. Deuchler served the IL 42nd District from 1980 to 1998.

1978

Vann Avedisian's company is participating in a restoration project in Hawaii. According to Vann, "It's exciting to be able to now announce that through our partnership with Hawaiian Legacy Re-forestation Initiative, we have pledged to plant 100,000 indigenous trees on Oahu and the Big Island. We are thrilled to be a Founding 14 partner and the first to have two forests, one on the North Shore at Gunstock Ranch and the other on the Big Island."

1989

Lara Druyan presented at the Digital Banking Conference in Austin, TX in October 2018. Lara is a Managing Director at RBC where she is the Head of Innovation on the West Coast, and was named as one of the "Silicon Valley Investors You Need to Know" by Inc. in 2016.

1983

Kurt Leafstrand was quoted in an article on MarTech Advisor, a news source on Marketing Technology. He spoke about the most recent product developed by his organization, Clari.

Emily Alexander Strong had an essay published in Bark magazine in 2018. The story, which centers around how a dog helps a family transition through a period of loss, can be found here: <https://thebark.com/content/healing-heart>

1984

Steve Gemmell was recently featured in Portland Interview Magazine. He discussed his life story and how it led him to create his construction company. <https://portlandinterviewmagazine.com/interviews/business/steve-gemmell/>

Maryam Judar is the Executive Director of the Citizen Advocacy Center. She was quoted in a Daily Southtown article about her work at CAC, stating "Citizen Initiative Award recipients are proactive about problems they identify in their neighborhoods. The award recognizes the crucial role of the citizen in democracy outside of Election Day. Because of their activism, democracy thrives, even in the face of adversity." Maryam's letter to the editor regarding the Illinois Ballot objection process was also recently published in the Tribune.

1985

Dr. P. Ronjon Paul was named one of the Top Doctors: Orthopedics by Chicago magazine. The list was featured in the magazine's October 2018 issue.



Middle School Head Anna Lenhardt with Michael '88 and Anna Beckley

1986

Chris Agos (opposite page) portrays Buzz Aldrin in the Apple TV series "For All Mankind," which reimagines the outcome of the global space race.

Andrew Lowery was featured on GeekWire as the "Geek of the Week". Andy is the co-founder and CEO of RealWear, a Vancouver based company that makes the HMT-1, a head-mounted computer that he thinks is key to better connecting workers in certain environments.

Brett Thompson was featured on the "Eat Green, Make Green" podcast. Brett is the founder of a socially responsible/impact investment firm called Treadlight Ventures and executive producer of the entertainment production company Midwinter Studios in Santa Monica.

1987

Claire Broido Johnson was recently named Managing Director of the Maryland Momentum Fund by The University System of Maryland. This \$10 million investment fund supports early-stage companies affiliated with USM institutions.

1988

Michael Beckley (above) returned to ACS to address the Class of 2019 as the evening graduation speaker. Michael is the co-founder of Appian Corporation.

Christopher Kao was named a top lawyer by Best Lawyers magazine. Chris is part of the firm Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP. He is based in Pillsbury's San Francisco and Silicon Valley offices, where he focuses on intellectual property and complex commercial litigation. Chris is the co-leader of Pillsbury's Taiwan practice.

Dr. Rachel Klima was profiled on the NASA Science site. You can read about what inspired her to become a planetary geologist and more at <https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/people/1722/rachel-klima/>

1989

Christos Hayward has continued his research in the field of Orthodox Christianity and has expanded his website and works.



Christian Goodwillie '90

1990

Christian Goodwillie (above) reminisced about the maple tapping photos in last year's ACS Alumni Newsletter, stating "Tapping maple trees at ACS has always been a really fond memory for me. When I moved to an old farm in upstate New York with my family five years ago we started tapping the trees on our property. My kids love drilling the trees and setting the spiles, and of course boiling the sap, cooking hot dogs, and roasting marshmallows! Thanks for keeping the tradition alive at Avery Coonley!"

1991

Jessica Glaser was selected to be a 2020 Women inPower Fellow. Women inPower is a fellowship program to help senior-level women advance to the highest levels of leadership across sectors. Jessica is among a group of 28 Fellows who was selected from a pool of nearly 250 applicants. Jessica is the Director of Patron Programs at the World Monuments Fund.

Matt Hornbach was among those listed in the [efinancialcareers.com](#) article "The 28 Nicest Fixed Income Traders and Analysts on Wall Street." Matt was specifically complimented on his helpfulness with rates research.

1992

Manisha Shetty Gulati was named Chief Customer Officer and SVP Payer and Provider for Clarify Health.

Jason Jedlinski is the Senior Vice President and Head of Consumer Products for Gannett and the USA Today Network. He recently appeared in several podcast episodes on Marketing today.

Jim Rybicki was able to make a childhood dream of his come true: along with other writers, staff and actors, he was able to co-create a radio drama. Jim remembers talking to his friend and fellow classmate **Ravi Shah '92** about his aspiration. "It's funny - creating a radio drama was something I wanted to do ever since I was at Avery Coonley. My classmate, Ravi Shah, and I used to talk about it back in the fourth grade. It was great to finally make it happen."

Michi Trota '92 is the new Senior Editor at Prism, a national not-for-profit media platform sharing the work and perspectives of leaders, activists, and storytellers from underrepresented communities. Michi was also recently named Editor-in-Chief for the Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America, a national professional organization providing support and advocacy for creators in genre fiction.

1993

Aarathi Singh had an article published on the Forbes website. Aarathi is Chief Operating Officer at MedGyn, a global women's medical device company, overseeing the company's operations and growth.

1995

Holly Goyert was quoted in an article regarding bird-smart wind industry practices. The article in Wind Power Engineering was written when Holly was the Bird-Smart Wind Energy Campaign Director for American Bird Conservancy. She is now on contract with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Holly writes "For the past decade or so, since getting my PhD in Biology, I've estimated the exposure of marine birds to offshore energy development and now I am applying similar quantitative modeling techniques to deep sea corals. I will say that, had Avery Coonley not done such a great job of preparing me early in math and science, I'm not sure how far I would have advanced in my STEM career. I am very appreciative!"

Peter Orłowicz and his wife Martha are happy to announce the birth of their son. Ethan (below) was born August 9, 2019.



Pavun Shetty is one of the Original Film producers working on the television series The Boys. He also recently closed a deal to remain Head of TV at Original, and to continue to work on various projects and programs, including S.W.A.T and The Boys. His team will also continue to shepherd development of new live-action drama and comedy series as well as animation for network, cable and streaming platforms.

1996

Jonathan Lehe was recently featured on the Center for International Development at Harvard University's podcast. Jonathan discussed how Precision Agriculture for Development (PAD) is working to improve the lives of farmers in developing countries by providing digital agricultural advisory services.

1997

Leslie Bembinster was featured in the September Issue of Interview Magazine. She wrote an article entitled "Leslie Bembinster Shows Us How to Crystalize Proteins and Boost Our Immunity." Per the article: "Leslie likes to joke that she's modeled both genes and jeans, and, as a molecular biologist-turned-fashion model, she's not wrong..."

Charles Rohlf recently presented at SportsTech Week in Barcelona. Charles, who is the Senior Director, Basketball Technology and Products at the NBA, spoke about the interaction of data with fans.

1998

Britta Schell was recently interviewed for an article on tips for business travelers. She has also been featured on the podcast “She Breaks the Mold” for her business acumen. Britta is a Research and Insights Consultant based in San Francisco.

Erika Shumate and her company were featured in the October 2018 issue of Inc. Magazine. Erika is the co-founder of Pinrose, a luxury fragrance company. She was also interviewed in June 2019 by New York Magazine about fragrance.

1999

Emily Bernard was named one of the “5 Women Entrepreneurs to watch in 2020”. Emily is the Co-Founder & Chief Product Officer of PlacePass, a single marketplace site that provides an easy way for travelers to find and book adventures.

James Knuckles passed his oral exams and successfully defended his thesis in 2019. James and his family live in London with their son.

Shilpa Rupani visited campus in April 2018 to talk with 7th and 8th Group students about her career path and why she continues to stay involved with ACS.

2000

Tara Carlson is the Executive Editor at G.P. Putnam’s Sons at Penguin Random House.

Marta Dehmlow Hernandez, Committee Communications Director at the United States Senate Committee on Armed Services, met with 7th Group during their trip to Washington D.C. in 2019.

2001

Natalie Self was recently named the Executive Director of STEMSTL, the St. Louis Regional STEM Learning Ecosystem. STEMSTL is a collaborative consortium committed to equitable access to high-quality STEM learning for all students in the St. Louis metro region.



Brittany Thompson (above) met with ACS’s 7th Group students during their 2018 visit to Washington D.C. Brittany gave a presentation called “Diplomacy, Foreign Service and the U.S. Department of State” to the group. Brittany also served as the guest speaker for the 2019 Graduation morning ceremony.

2004

Michael Zevin and **Jessica Glaser ’91** were our honored speakers at the 2018 Graduation.

2008

Emily Temple-Wood was featured on The Colin McEnroe Show’s episode “Women Buried in the Footnotes of Scientific Discovery.” The show explored gender inequality in the sciences.

2009

Mackenzie Schiff represented the Class of 2009 as a guest speaker at the 37th Annual ACS Auction. Mackenzie is currently a Masters in Science in Development Studies candidate at the London School of Economics.

2010

Emily Loughman is an Indianapolis Colts Cheerleader. In addition to her many cheer, performance, and appearance responsibilities for the Colts, she is also an Early Childhood Educator at The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis Preschool.

Ella Roberts has been named a Schwarzman Scholar. Ella studied Film & Television Production and Computer Science at the University of Southern California. She founded the non-profit Code Your Chances and runs coding camps for young girls internationally. She has worked with Oscar-winning filmmakers, screened her films globally, and currently works for Los Angeles startup, Brud.

2013

Jacob Hare returned to campus to talk about “What It Means to be an ACS Alum” to our 7th and 8th group students in the spring of 2019. Jacob attended Culver Academies for high school, and is currently a Senior at the United States Military Academy West Point.

2014

Hunter Morris is attending the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business. Hunter was awarded a Presidential Scholarship from University of Southern California and was the recipient of the Andrew Corporation Scholarship locally.

2015

Loey Bull (right) attended A Cappella Academy, a program in Los Angeles designed to train, foster, and inspire the bright young minds of contemporary a cappella. Her performance was recently featured on their Summer 2020 recruitment video.

Ethan Harrast was awarded the Village of Oak Brook "Athlete of the Year" Award. Ethan was selected for his exceptional participation in baseball.

2016

Erin Gillen was given an exciting opportunity to live and work in Washington D.C. in 2019. She attended school and worked on Capitol Hill as a United States Senate Page.

Maya Goyal traveled to Honduras for a mission trip during the summer of 2019 alongside two eye surgeons. She specifically visited clinics in San Pedro Sula and Santa Rosa to help deliver eye care to those in Honduras who may not have access to proper medical care. This was Maya's second mission trip to the area. For both years, she was in charge of pre-op and post-op care. This year, she also coordinated with a local Honduran around her age to kick start a donation drive for eyeglasses, both in Chicago and Honduras, resulting in donations of over 250 pairs of glasses.



Juliet Hare was recently honored along with 16 other young women at a showcase hosted by Distinguished Young Women of Illinois. Juliet was the 2nd Runner Up for the organization's scholarship and also received the fitness award.

Charlie Mueller (cello) and **Catherine Ramsey** (harp) closed out their 2018-19 season with Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra with a final concert in St Petersburg, Russia. As part of the CYSO, they toured the Baltic region, and performed concerts in Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Russia. Both plan to continue their pursuit of musical education after graduating high school in 2020 and will be returning to the CYSO for the 2019-20 season.

Catherine Ramsey, Heather Ramsey '18, and **Cate Stocki '18** had a once in a lifetime experience in December 2019. They traveled with the Downers Grove North High School band to perform in London at the New Year's Eve parade. The band was also featured on the BBC's "Big Breakfast". Additionally, Catherine also performed harp with the DGN Wind Ensemble in one of the special Bernstein concerts at Cadogan Hall in London.

Lily Ryan recently played the role of Mrs. Curtin in "A Man of No Importance," and Mabel in "The Pirates of Penzance" (Or, The Slave of Duty) for The Chicago Academy for the Arts.

Frankie Sheehy won first place in the U1600 division of the 2019 U.S. Chess Federation National High School championship in 2019.

Britta Vaughan was awarded a NSLI-Y Scholarship to study Arabic in Morocco during the summer of 2019. She spent two months living with a host family and attending classes to learn Arabic, as well as traveling in the region.

2018

Ninabella Arlis appeared in a production of "Rent" at the Music Makers Theatre in Western Springs. Ninabella played the role of the Pastor and sang various other parts with the Chorus.

Julia Marshall and her teammates from Creative Ice Theatre won the bronze medal at the 2018 National Theatre on Ice competition in Geneva, Illinois.

Zahrah Qureshi and **Aadit Bhavsar '19** were part of the Hinsdale Central Model UN team that took second place at the recent Chicago International Model United Nations conference. This event drew over 1,000 students from around the world. Aadit also received an Honorable Mention for his work on his committee. Zahrah was named Outstanding Delegate on her committee.

College Care Package Party

Ten moms from the Class of 2015 attended the annual College Care Package Party on Tuesday, October 1st. Goodies including ACS branded materials, snacks and treats, as well as a signed card from our faculty and staff were included in the boxes.



Pictured from left to right are Grace Harrast, Diana Halley, Kavita Shah, Mary Ellen Bull, Laura Heimburger, Laura Krylov, Sarah Opler, Amy Louis, Meghan Flannery, Denise Nigro.



Pat Huebner

In Memorium

Pat Huebner, long-time member of The Avery Coonley School community, passed away peacefully on October 10, 2019. Pat first joined ACS in 1989 as a Counselor/Coordinator of Student Services. During her 11 years working at ACS, she took on many roles including Assistant Head and Dean of Students. She left Avery Coonley to become the Director of Guidance/Counseling and Social Work at Hinsdale Central High School, where she worked for 16 years until she retired in June 2016. Prior to joining the staff at ACS, she taught second and third grades in Cicero, IL for nine years, worked part-time at Morton College in the Counseling Office, and was a counselor in a private practice. She was extremely proud of her 36-year career in education with many diverse experiences.

Pat served as a member of The Avery Coonley School Board of Trustees from 2006-2016 and then as an Honorary Trustee, and was a member of the ACS Alumni Council since 2013. Pat was an energetic advocate in reaching out to former students and encouraging their continued connection and participation with the School.

Pat shared that one of her proudest accomplishments was “having had the opportunity to work with such brilliant and talented students who respected each other for their innate strengths and gifts. I remember a teacher telling me we call the classes groups and not grades because the students are working above grade level, and we set the bar so high, but these kids just keep raising it with their love for learning!” Many students remember Pat’s kindness and compassion for them; she always took the time to get to know students and their families. Pat continually gave to generations of ACS families through her enthusiasm, generosity, and commitment to ACS’s mission to provide the best possible education and support for gifted students. Pat is survived by her beloved husband Fred J. Huebner III and many family and friends.

The Patricia Huebner Memorial Scholarship Fund at ACS was established to provide support for ACS students who qualify for significant financial aid from the School. Contributions will help cover the costs of materials, fees, special events, class activities, and trips for students who might not otherwise be able to afford them.



The Report of Giving to The Avery Coonley School

Among the many traditions initiated by our founder, Queene Ferry Coonley, was her remarkable record of philanthropic giving. Beginning with the first Kindergarten she established in 1906 to her extraordinary gift of The Avery Coonley School building and grounds, Mrs. Coonley provided future generations the foundation to learn and grown in a beautiful and caring educational environment. Over the years, additional charitable support from parents, Board members, alumni families, faculty, staff and other friends of ACS has enabled the school to expand and prosper.

Charitable giving supports the life of The Avery Coonley School on a daily basis. It is evident in the classrooms, where small groups of students, highly-trained faculty, an innovative curriculum, and state-of-the-art technology all interact in magical ways. It is seen in the rich offerings of the arts, physical education, and extracurricular activities that address the development of the whole child. Charitable support makes possible the amazing array of physical spaces of this beautiful and historic campus. It is the traditions, special events, and trips that build a strong and welcoming community. It is in the financial aid that ensures that an ACS education can be within the reach of as many families as possible. All of this, and more, is made possible by the contributors acknowledged in this Annual Report.

Each year, the School conducts two major fundraising programs that are conducted by the Development Office: the ACS Fund and the Annual Auction. Charitable gifts may also be directed to one of three major endowment funds.

The General Endowment, which supports a wide range of School needs; the Professional Growth Endowment, which provides vital resources for the ongoing professional development of faculty; and the Financial Aid Endowment, which supports the goal of broadening access for qualified students of all socio-economic backgrounds.

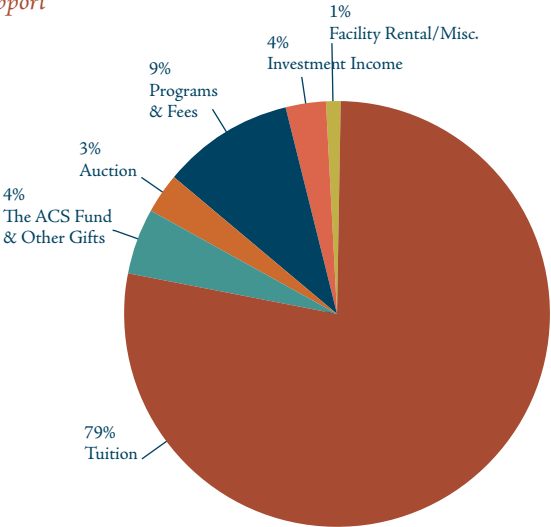
The tradition of philanthropy started by Queene Ferry Coonley continues to be a vital part of the success and well-being of ACS. Every charitable gift received supports the School's commitment to providing a transformative education for the students of today and tomorrow, inspires others to give, and represents the collective power of our community. Thank you for making ACS your philanthropic priority.

How ACS Works Financially

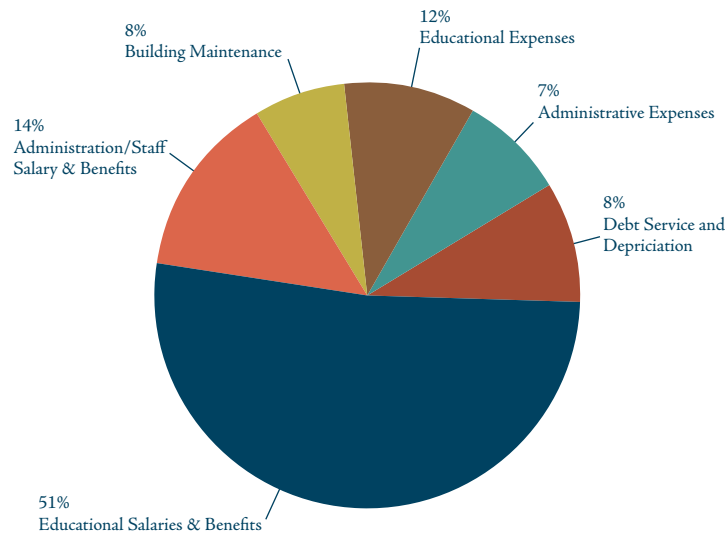
Revenue and Support

Tuition Income Less Need Based Financial Aid	\$7,230,425
Full tuition is charged to all students who attend the School. ACS awards financial aid to qualified recipients based on financial need calculated by School and Student Services (SSS), managed by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). Partial financial aid was awarded to 50 students during the 2018-2019 school year.	
ACS Fund and Other Gifts	\$366,693
The ACS Fund is generous charitable support from current parents, alumni, grandparents and other friends of the School to help pay the additional expenses not covered by tuition.	
Auction	\$280,259
Net proceeds from the ACS Annual Auction helps bridge the gap between what tuition covers and the actual costs of educating students at ACS. Currently, the gap is \$2,661 per student.	
Programs and Fees	\$853,759
Net income from the After School Program, Summer Program, milk fees, testing services, and new student fees assist with paying for the variety of addition programs and services offered by ACS.	
Investment Income	\$382,562
Income earned on operating cash, designated cash, and a portion of the interest earned on the endowment.	
Facilities Rental and Miscellaneous Income	\$85,326
Net revenue generated from the rental of school facilities and other programs sponsored by the School.	

2018–2019 General Operating Fund
Revenue and Support



2018–2019 General Operating Fund Expenses



Expenses

Educational Salaries and Benefits \$4,326,742

Salaries and benefits for faculty and assistants. The benefits include retirement contributions, health insurance, life insurance, disability, and FICA contributions.

Administration and Staff Salaries and Benefits \$1,193,541

Salaries and benefits for administrators, maintenance, and ACS staff. The benefits include retirement contributions, health insurance, life insurance, disability, and FICA contributions.

Building Maintenance \$658,006

Contracted maintenance services including custodial, landscape services, snow removal, utilities, maintenance supplies, and repair costs.

Educational Expenses \$999,810

Expenses related to instruction including educational software, curricular materials, textbooks, technology equipment, classroom supplies, educational professional growth, standardized testing costs, as well as spending to fulfill requirements of temporarily restricted donations.

Administrative Expenses \$590,954

Includes property and casualty insurance, financial and legal costs, photocopying, postage, office supplies, telephone, professional growth for the administration, and membership dues for school associations.

Debt Service and Depreciation \$740,611

The Village of Downers Grove issued Revenue Bonds on the school's behalf. The principal and interest payments represent the current cash outlay to cover the Middle School addition and a portion of the Lower School renovations. Depreciation is also included.

2018 – 2019 School Year

Statement of Income and Expenses – Operating Fund

For the Period Ending June 30, 2019

	Actual	Budget	Variance
<i>Revenues and Support</i>			
Tuition income	\$7,230,425	\$7,159,199	\$71,226
Programs	790,831	756,800	34,031
Fees	62,928	47,050	15,878
Dividend and interest income	382,562	20,000	362,562
Miscellaneous income	34,434	18,000	16,434
Facility rental	50,892	43,000	7,892
Internally-generated income	\$8,552,072	\$8,044,049	\$508,023
Auction proceeds	280,259	250,000	30,259
Unrestricted gifts and annual giving	366,693	330,000	36,693
Total support	\$646,952	\$580,000	\$66,952
Total income	\$9,199,024	\$8,624,049	\$574,975
<i>Expenses</i>			
Educational	\$5,326,552	5,631,437	\$304,885
Administration and staff	1,784,495	1,877,263	92,768
Maintenance	528,071	529,000	929
Building and grounds	129,935	168,000	38,065
Interest expense and bond costs	129,734	394,349	264,615
Depreciation	596,651	0	(\$596,651)
Board expenses	14,226	24,000	9,774
Total operating expenses	\$8,509,664	\$8,624,049	\$114,385
2018-2019 surplus/(deficit)	\$689,360	0	\$689,360
Special expenditures and allocations	(\$689,360)	0	(\$689,360)
Net Change in Undesignated Fund Balance	0	0	0

An independent auditor's report is available for review in the ACS Business Office.



THE ACS FUND

AND ENDOWMENT FUNDS

The Importance and Tradition of Giving

The Avery Coonley School extends a warm thank you to the members of the school community who generously supported the School in the 2018-2019 school year. Board members, parents, alumni, alumni families, grandparents, faculty, staff, foundations, corporations, and other friends generously contributed to the ACS Fund and other funds. This generosity enables the school to provide a transformative experience for our students and helps ACS continue to deliver in its mission to serve gifted learners. It is also a demonstration of our collective commitment to the importance of a specialized education for gifted and talented young minds.

Contributions to ACS Fund support operations in the current school year by “filling the gap” between tuition and other revenue and operating expenses, which allows the school to remain financially sound. Through your generosity, we raised \$366,693 for the ACS Fund and restricted funds to support the School. Once again, every member of the Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff supported the Fund.

Special thanks to the following volunteers for their significant roles in securing philanthropic support:

ACS Fund Leadership for 2018-2019 School Year

ACS Fund Chairs

Neal and Jennifer Reenan

Alumni Chairs

Abigail Gupta '14

Michael Gupta '12

Faculty and Staff Chairs

Jennifer Marvel-Gillono

Kristen Teague



Members of the Class of 2020 gather for the annual Fall Fest dinner.

Honor Roll of Donors

2018-2019 ACS Fund Leadership Giving Circles

The leadership giving circles were established to honor the rich history, traditions, and founding leaders of ACS.

Thank you to the following members of the School community who supported the ACS Fund during the fiscal year July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019.

Elizabeth Coonley Circle

Honoring the only child of Avery and Queenie Ferry Coonley, and the first student of the school, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$10,000 and above.

Mr. Peter and Mrs. Kathleen Danakis
Mr. Lloyd "Chip" Fry '67 and the
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
Mr. Frederick '55 and Mrs. Kay Krehbiel
Mr. John Krehbiel, Jr. '51
Dr. Steven and Mrs. Amy Louis
Amy & Steve Louis Foundation
Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Lisa McClear
Nickum Foundation
Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
Mr. Martin and Mrs. Catherine Slark

Waldron Faulkner Circle

Honoring Avery and Queenie's son-in-law and the architect of the 1929 school building, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$5,000 to \$7,499.

Mr. John and Mrs. Ann Grube
Ms. Leslie S. Hindman '68
Leslie S. Hindman Fund at
The Chicago Community Foundation
Mr. David and Mrs. Heidi Keeling
Mr. Robert and Mrs. Eva Metzger '38
M.R. Metzger Family Foundation
Mr. Brendan and Mrs. Mary Sheehy
Mr. Robert and Mrs. JoAnna Sohovich
Anonymous (2)

Henry Chapman Mercer Circle

Honoring the designer and ceramicist who created the fireplace, floor tiles and Cloister triptych, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$2,500 to \$4,999.

Mr. Jeffrey and Mrs. Debra Bruns
Mr. Benton and Mrs. Stephanie Bullwinkel
Mr. Jeffrey Chen and Mrs. Victoria Cheng
Mr. Carl and Ms. Elizabeth Clark
Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Deb Clarke
Mr. Mark and Mrs. Jacqueline Gupta
Mr. Ryan and Mrs. Kathleen Havlick
Dr. Bryce Higa and Dr. Anna Stanislaus
Mr. Naufal Khan and Mrs. Asma Afridi
Dr. Jae and Mrs. Jiyeon Kim
Mr. Robert '79 and Mrs. Jingjing Kipp
Mr. Stephen Lunn
Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Daile McCann
Dr. Uday and Mrs. Sheetal Narahari
The O'Donoghue Family
Mr. Eddie and Mrs. Sarah Opler
Mr. Ryan and Mrs. Laura Sandahl
Mr. Edwin Savarimuthu and
Ms. Dhevi Kandasamy
Mr. Martin and Mrs. Laura Stasaitis
Dr. Franklin and Dr. Peggy Tan
Mr. Sailesh Thakur and
Mrs. Ramapriya Ramasubramanian
Mr. William and Dr. Farah Turk
Mr. Joel and Mrs. Shannon Weinberger
Mr. Aloysius Wild, III and
Dr. Caer-Eve McCabe
Dr. Huanzhou Yu and Dr. Xiaofei Dong
Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Laura Zeman
Anonymous

Lucia Burton Morse Circle

Acknowledging our first Head of School and Mrs. Coonley's collaborator for over 30 years, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$1,000 to \$2,499.

Dr. Nouri and Mrs. Shatha Al-Khaled
Dr. Michelle Andreoli-McMahon
Mr. Iqbal Anwar and Mrs. Tashmin Lopa
Mr. Pavel Apostolov and
Ms. Neriman Korensarska
Mr. William and Mrs. Reagen Atwood
Mr. Srikanth and Mrs. Lavanya Batchu
Dr. Mark Batts and Ms. Julie Cirillo
Dr. Anup Bendre and Dr. Anuradha Perni
Mr. Adrian and Mrs. Cristen Bielat
Mr. John Blackburn and
Ms. Nancy R. Doris '91
Mr. Robert and Mrs. Tracy Blackburn
Mr. William and Ms. Joanna Bradford
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Michelle Brown
Ms. Mary Ellen Bull '79
Dr. Kenneth Candido and Dr. Durre Shahwar
Mr. Kenneth Chang and Dr. Julia Espel
Dr. Amir Darki and Dr. Dina Dadabhoy
Mr. Ajay and Mrs. Priya Desai
Mr. Patrick Doherty and Ms. Kristina Murray
Mr. Edward Tim Doris '90
Mr. Paul Druzinsky
Mr. Robert and Mrs. Kathryn Dunlop
Ms. Jennifer Elliott
Mr. Matt and Mrs. Suzy Ennis
Mr. Yong Fan and Mrs. Tzu-Ling Yeh
Mr. Hans K. and Mrs. Judith Fauske
Dr. Joshua and Mrs. Sara Foxson
Mr. Rik Geiersbach and Ms. Carolyn Burger
Mr. Brian Gilmartin and Dr. Lisa Karaitis
Ms. Allyson Gorman
Dr. Raj and Dr. Nina Goyal
Dr. Vivek and Dr. Sonal Gupta
Mr. Keith Holecek '94
Holecek Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Dr. John and Mrs. Grace Hong
Ms. Linda Hou
Mr. Michael Jan and Ms. Alice Chin
Mr. Stephen and Mrs. Sharon Jaster
Mr. William and Mrs. Carolyn Johnson
Dr. JB and Mrs. Elizabeth Joo
Dr. Rishi and Mrs. Nidhi Kapoor
Mr. Houman and Mrs. Parastoo Kashanipour
Drs. Syed and Mariam Khan

Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Kate Kocinski
Mr. Kirill and Mrs. Laura Krylov
Mr. Miles Lasater and Dr. Glyn Lasater '92
The Miles and G. Elizabeth Lasater Fund
Mr. Wei Li and Mrs. Jing Xing
Dr. Ted Liu and Mrs. Ellen Huang
Mr. Christopher Lok and Ms. Josephine Sheng
Dr. James and Dr. Jamie Lubawski
Dr. Sophia Majid
Mr. Dimitre and Mrs. Katerina Marinov
Mr. James and Mrs. BJ Marshall
Mr. Gerard and Dr. Lisa Martin
Dr. Sachin and Mrs. Deepali Mittal
Mr. Madhu and Dr. Sreya Pallath
Mr. Rishin and Dr. Sonal Pandya
Mr. Ron and Mrs. Gladys Partridge
Dr. Udit and Mrs. Malini Patel
Mr. Matthew and Mrs. Kristin Porter
Dr. Melissa Pradhan
Mr. Brett '76 and Mrs. Antonia S. Pritchard
Mr. Imran and Mrs. Niema Qureshi
Dr. Saleh Rifai and Mrs. Chams Atassi
Mr. Tapan and Dr. Kavita Shah
Mr. Rajiv Singh and Dr. Priya Khanna-Singh
Mr. Vishnu '92 and Mrs. Sailaja Srinivasan
Mr. Rajcan and Mrs. Yuanna Surface
Ms. Julie Swinehart and
Ms. Andrea Hornickle
Mr. Andrew Taylor and
Mrs. Maria Soledad Lencioni
Mr. Girmantas and Mrs. Sigita Urbonas
Dr. Matthew and Dr. Joanna Van Beek
Mr. Sreeram Prasad and Mrs. Uma Veluchamy
Dr. Venkat Venkatakrishnan and
Dr. Kavitha Rao
Mr. Mark Wiemelt and Ms. Tracey Brill
Prof. Jie Yang and Dr. Liping Tong
Dr. Jeffrey Yeh and Mrs. Stephanie Lizaso Yeh
Dr. Jian Zhang and Dr. Lan Hong
Dr. Hui Zhao and Dr. Yi Zhou
Anonymous (6)

Maple Tapping Circle

Representing one of the School's most cherished traditions, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$500 to \$999.

Mr. John and Mrs. Artemis Anos
Mr. Damian and Mrs. Stephanie Austin
Mr. Jay J. Chandrasekhar '82
Dr. Huayun Chen and Mrs. Wei Qi
Dr. Steven Chough and Dr. Anna Park
Mr. Mehrab and Mrs. Zarine Deboo
Dr. David and Mrs. Xufei Ding
Mr. Kevin and Mrs. Kathleen Flynn
Mr. Joshua and Mrs. Jessica Friess
Mr. Joe I. Gillespie, Jr. and
Mrs. Kristina Gillespie
Mr. Mike and Mrs. Sue Gould
Mr. Asgar Hakim
Mr. John and Mrs. Joan Harrison
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Signaling a decades-old tradition of a new school day at ACS, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$250 to \$499.

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*Symbolizing the special place of serenity
and action at the center of the school, this
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up to \$249.*

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Group Seven students present at the Science Fair.

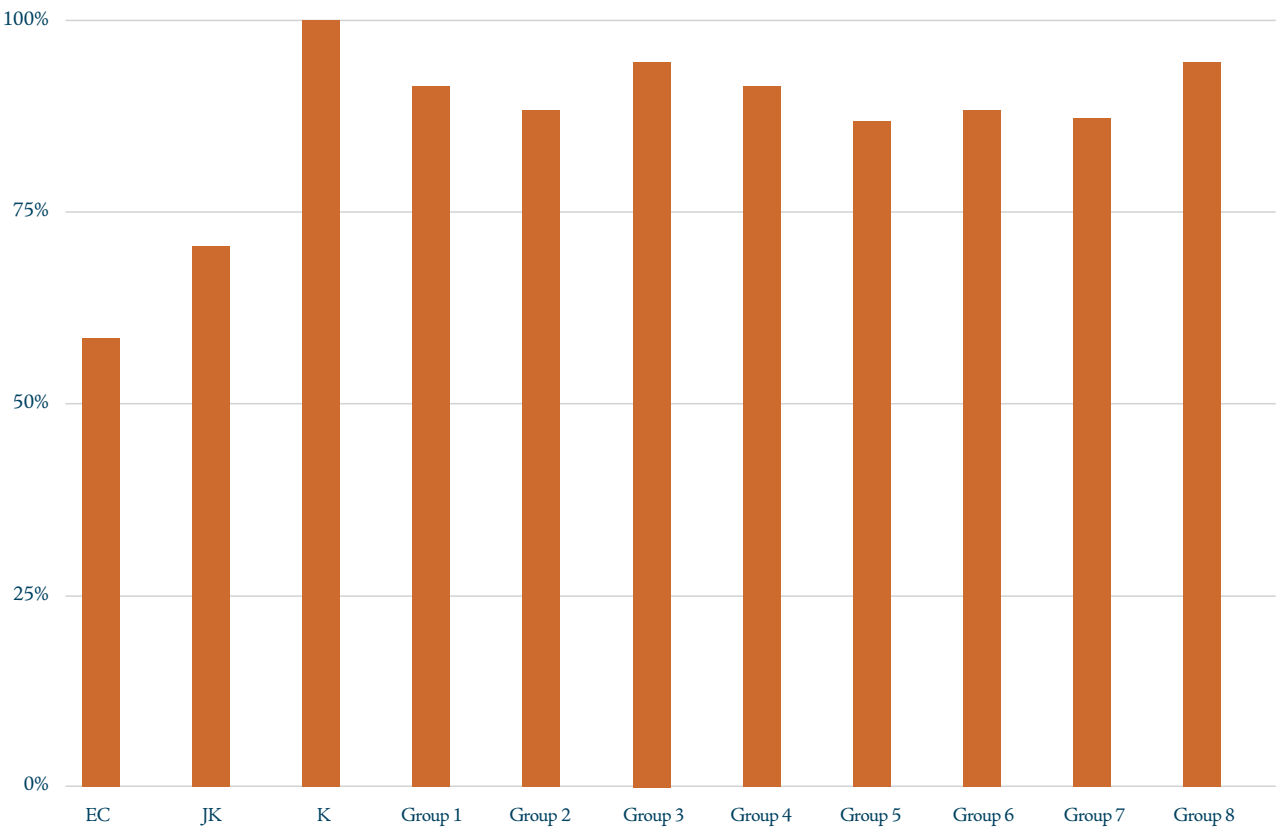
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 Ms. Kara Thorpe-Dosen
 Mr. Robert and Mrs. Nina Tipton
 Mr. Jesse Lex and Ms. Michi Trota '92
 Dr. Amir and Dr. Sara Vafa
 Mr. Matthew and Mrs. Angel Van Howe
 Mr. William Franko and Ms. Jennifer Vaughan
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 Mr. Jeffrey Westbrook and Ms. Kelly Stokes
 Mr. Brian and Mrs. Donna Wetta
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 Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Ana Wilson
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 Anonymous (7)

Parent Participation

The ACS Fund is a vital cornerstone of philanthropy at Avery Coonley. Parent giving is critical to help bridge the difference between the cost of tuition and the actual cost of educating each student at ACS.

Thank you to the 92% of school families who made a gift to the ACS Fund in the fiscal year July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019.

The ACS Fund Contributions by Group



The ACS Fund *Parent Participation by Group*

Early Childhood - 57%

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Mr. Spencer and Mrs. Amanda Burns
Mr. Kenneth Chang and Dr. Julia Espel
Mr. Sean and Mrs. Jamie Dougherty
Mr. Pradeep and Mrs. Kristen Jain
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Mr. JP Ramirez and Dr. Kimberly Bauer
Mr. Jason Yao and Mrs. Ling Ge
Mr. Lee and Mrs. Alexandria Zachos
Dr. Jian Zhang and Dr. Lan Hong
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Dr. Adnan and Dr. Stefanie Ali
Mr. Richard and Mrs. Shawn Aycock
Mr. Adrian and Mrs. Cristen Bielat
Mr. John Blackburn and
Ms. Nancy R. Doris '91
Mr. Jeffrey Chen and Mrs. Victoria Cheng
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Dr. Venkat Venkatakrishnan and
Dr. Kavitha Rao
Anonymous

Kindergarten - 100%

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Mr. Girmantas and Mrs. Sigita Urbonas
Mr. Mark and Mrs. Nicole Walus
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Mrs. Christine Kurczaba-Aquino
Mr. John Blackburn and
Ms. Nancy R. Doris '91
Mr. Benton and Mrs. Stephanie Bullwinkel
Dr. Amir Darki and Dr. Dina Dadabhoy
Mr. Mehrab and Mrs. Zarine Deboo
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Mr. William and Mrs. Lindsay Sickinger
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Mr. Derek and Mrs. Ying Timmermann
Dr. Matthew and Dr. Joanna Van Beek
Dr. Jeffrey Yeh and Mrs. Stephanie Lizaso Yeh
Mr. Lee and Mrs. Alexandria Zachos
Anonymous (2)

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Mrs. Maria Soledad Lencioni
Mr. Sailesh Thakur and
Mrs. Ramapriya Ramasubramanian
Mr. Robert and Mrs. Nina Tipton
Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Laura Zeman
Dr. Yunde Zhong and Dr. Shuli Wang
Anonymous (4)

Parent Participation

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Mr. Pavel Apostolov and
Ms. Neriman Korensarska
Mr. Carl and Ms. Elizabeth Clark
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Kathleen Danakis
Mr. Robert and Mrs. Kathryn Dunlop
Dr. April Finan
Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Zuzana Fitzpatrick
Mr. Joshua and Mrs. Jessica Friess
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Mr. Ivan and Mrs. Sanja Jovanovic
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Drs. Syed and Mariam Khan
Mr. Alok and Mrs. Barnali Khuntia
Mr. Kevin and Mrs. Heather Manning
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Group Three students enjoy the Japanese Luncheon.

Group Four - 91%

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Mr. Jeffrey and Mrs. Debra Bruns
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Dr. Jae and Mrs. Jiyeon Kim
Mr. Edward Lam and Dr. Angela Gomez-Lam
Mr. Christopher Lok and Ms. Josephine Sheng
Mr. Stephen Lunn
Mr. Dimitre and Mrs. Katerina Marinov
Mr. Trac Nghiem and Mrs. Kulchitt Vilaichitt
Mr. Michael Nicolai and Ms. Lisa Castle
Dr. Udit and Mrs. Malini Patel
Mr. Viktor and Mrs. Oksana Perekhzhuk
Mrs. Natalie Powell
Mr. JP Ramirez and Dr. Kimberly Bauer
Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
Mr. Vishnu '92 and Mrs. Sailaja Srinivasan
Mr. Derek and Mrs. Ying Timmermann
Dr. Huanzhou Yu and Dr. Xiaofei Dong
Anonymous (2)

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Dr. Robert and Mrs. Michelle Strugala
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Dr. Caer-Eve McCabe
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Group Six - 89%

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 Mr. David and Mrs. Deborah McGarry
 Mr. Rupesh Patel and Mrs. Simrit Patel '94
 Mr. Matthew and Mrs. Kristin Porter
 Mr. James and Mrs. Susanna Ramsden
 Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
 Mr. Edwin Savarimuthu and
 Ms. Dhevi Kandasamy
 JoAnna and Robert Sohovich
 Ms. Julie Swinehart and
 Ms. Andrea Hornickle
 Dr. Franklin and Dr. Peggy Tan
 Dr. David and Ms. Angela Tse
 Mr. Ramesh Venkataraman and
 Ms. Krishnaveni Iyer
 Anonymous

Group Seven - 87%

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 Mr. Chadwick and Mrs. Evgenia Baatz
 Dr. Anup Bendre and Dr. Anuradha Perni
 Mr. Robert and Mrs. Tracy Blackburn
 Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Gracetrue Buzzard
 Dr. Steven Chough and Dr. Anna Park
 Mr. Dave and Mrs. Margie Davis
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 Dr. Aneta Paniczko-Gastolek
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 Mr. Wai and Mrs. Jessica Lau
 Mr. Evan and Mrs. Beth McNish
 Dr. Frederick Mueller and Ms. Cindy Leicht
 Mr. David Reynolds and Mrs. Wendi Wilson
 Mr. Melvin Sanny and Mrs. Iona Bunea
 Mr. Tapan and Dr. Kavita Shah
 Mr. Scott and Mrs. Michelle Stastny
 Dr. Robert and Mrs. Michelle Strugala
 Mr. Rajcan and Mrs. Yuanna Surface
 Mr. Steve and Mrs. Amy Walsh
 Mr. Aloysius Wild, III and
 Dr. Caer-Eve McCabe
 Dr. Michael Wince and Ms. Pamela Cox
 Mr. Keith Woodruff and
 Dr. Monina Quindipan
 Prof. Jie Yang and Dr. Liping Tong

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 Mr. James and Mrs. Trecia Gandurski
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 Mr. David and Mrs. Deborah McGarry
 Mr. Tushar and Mrs. Kerul Mehta
 Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Laura Murray
 Mr. Eddie and Mrs. Sarah Opler
 Prof. Damian Ortiz and
 Mrs. Adeena Weiss Ortiz
 Ms. Stacy Recchia
 Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
 Dr. Saleh Rifai and Mrs. Chams Atassi
 Ms. Julie Swinehart and
 Ms. Andrea Hornickle
 Mr. William and Dr. Farah Turk
 Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Lisa Vaughan
 Dr. William Whittier and
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 Mr. Charles and Mrs. Amy Wright
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2018 - 2019 Alumni Donors

Alumni Donors

With deep gratitude, we recognize the loyalty and philanthropic support of our alumni to the ACS Fund, our endowments, and other restricted funds. In addition to their financial support, alumni support ACS through their service on the Board of Trustees, the Alumni Council, as guest speakers for special events and through other volunteer opportunities. ACS alumni remain connected to their alma mater through the annual Auction and a wide variety of other events, programs, and activities.

Thank you to the alumni who made contributions to a variety of funding areas during the fiscal year July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019.



Group Four students prepare for the American Indian plays.

Eva Metzger '38
Patricia Lansdale-Rice '41
David North '43
Theodore Tylman '48
Dorothy Wass '48
Richard Adams '51
Marilyn Carle '51
John Krehbiel, Jr. '51
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Lloyd "Chip" Fry '67
Mark Schindler '67
George Cochran '68
Leslie Hindman '68
Kevin Peterson '69
Pan Demetrakakes '70
Jean Crespi '72
Cathleen McKinzie '72
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Mary Ellen Bull '79
Robert Kipp '79
Nancy McGreevy '79
Jay Chandrasekhar '82
Chris Agos '86
Amy Peckham '87
Supryia Ray '87
Michael Beckley '88
Carissa (Angerhofer) Means '89
Ritesh Shah '89
Edward Tim Doris '90
Nancy R. Doris '91
Anthony Engel '91
Glyn Lasater '92
Vishnu Srinivasan '92
Michi Trota '92
Ashish Vora '92
James Feffer '93
Shilpa Gokhale '94
Keith Holecek '94
Simrit Patel '94
Anisha Shetty '95
Sonia Mittal '96
Neal Winterhof '96

Maria Rahmandar '98
David Breisch '99
Jaime Mazur '99
Elizabeth Slark Carlson '01
Karen Winterhof '01
Marysa Leya '03
Kathryn Breisch '04
Peter Winterhof '04
Jessica Bollo '05
Liz Melton '05
Rob Strumillo '06
Miranda Herzog '09
Aidan Weinberger '10
Edward Carson '11
Alexander Wiltz '11
Michael Gupta '12
Dana Lee Platt '12
Kellan Weinberger '12
Daniel Clarke '13
Madeline Cohen '13
Emma Wilson '13
Abby Gupta '14
Alexander Lee Platt '14
Seamus Flannery '15
Sophie Opler '15
Julia Fischer '16
Maddie Flynn '16
Maxwell Orr '16
Lily Ryan '16
Frankie Sheehy '16
Noah Hansfield '18
Joshua Orr '18
Skylar Rasmason '18
Nolan Sheehy '18
Caitlyn Stocki '18
Anonymous (6)

Tributes and Memorials

A memorial or tribute is a wonderful way to honor a friend or loved one while supporting The Avery Coonley School. When a memorial or tribute gift is received, a note is sent to the honoree or, in the case of a memorial, the family of the honoree, telling them of your thoughtful and kind gesture. Memorial and tribute gifts are always welcome and may be directed to support The ACS Fund or the endowment funds.

Thank you to those who made memorial and tribute gifts during the fiscal year July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019. Donor is listed below each honoree.

Gifts were received in Honor of:

Rosemary, Amelia, and Celeste Bullwinkel
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Group Two students perform in their Colonial Musical.

Gifts were received in Loving Memory of:

Mrs. Denise Henkin
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Restricted Giving

Thank you to those supporters who made contributions to a variety of funding areas during the fiscal year July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019.

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ACS also extends our sincere gratitude to the many families and students who contribute to the ACS Library Birthday Book Club and Library Enrichment Program each year.

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The following corporations and foundations generously supported The School in the 2018-2019 fiscal year. These organizations include family foundations, donor-advised funds, and companies that offer matching gift programs. We encourage all donors to inquire about the possibility of a gift match through their employer - it is an easy way to double or even triple the impact of your donation!

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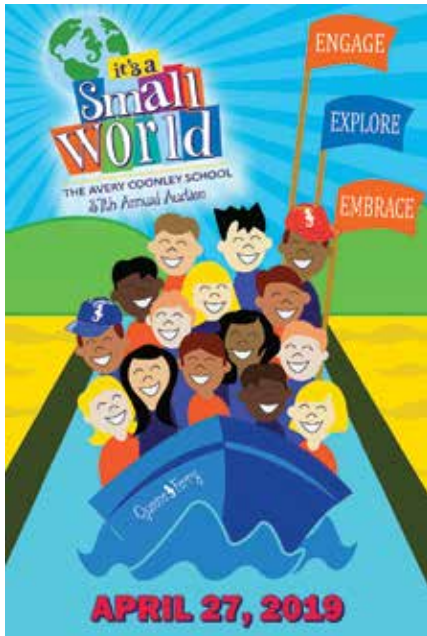
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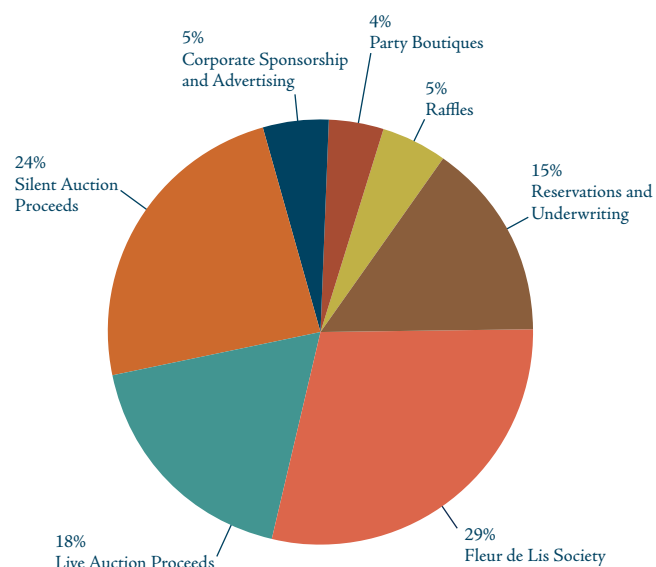




It's A Small World Auction Chairs (left to right) Mark and Jackie Gupta and Sarah and Eddie Opler.

It's a Small World, the 37th Annual Auction, was held on Saturday, April 27, 2019 at the Hilton Chicago/Oak Brook Hills Resort and Conference Center in Oak Brook, Illinois. The event brought the community together for an opportunity to create lasting memories among friends old and new, thanks to the generosity and effort of many volunteers and donors. The auction raised over \$415,000 (gross) for our remarkable students and the School!

2019 Auction Revenue



2019 Auction

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Kindergarten

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Group Two

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Carissa Means '89

Group Four

Lisa Castle

Group Five

Reagen Atwood

Group Six

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Group Seven

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Early Childhood students on a "Seahorse Hunt" around campus.

Fleur de Lis Society

The Fleur de Lis Society is comprised of benefactors who provide philanthropic support to the Auction at a leadership level of \$1,000 or more. The Society, established in 1990, is critical to the fundraising success of this event. Sincere appreciation is shared with all contributors to the Fleur de Lis Society of the 2019 Auction!

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The Avery Coonley School gratefully acknowledges the following individuals and businesses who contributed items and/or services to the 2019 Auction valued at \$1,000 or more.

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2019 Auction

The 2019 Fund-A-Need

This year's Fund-A-Need provided \$51,900 in underwriting in support of two initiatives: an Outdoor Challenge Course and Campus Beautification. Encouraging children to explore the great outdoors and take full advantage of the school's natural setting are fundamental to the School's progressive roots. The Outdoor Challenge Course, commonly known as a low ropes course, provides a unique platform for outdoor physical education and explorative play for all students. The system consists of a series of elements professionally installed on campus. Whether in groups or as individuals, students have the opportunity to participate in a number of outdoor activities that promote personal development and team building. Students benefit from tackling both physical and mental challenges, as well as emotional risk-taking, then incorporate those lessons to help build their character. Read more about the Course on page 5.

In addition to creating new, adventurous ways for children to explore the natural beauty of the ACS campus, this year's Fund-A-Need also helped ACS transform the parking lot median into a raised garden bed. The new garden bed enhances the beauty of the ACS campus while also establishing a safety median for students and all guests during peak traffic times. Thank you to the following donors who supported the 2019 Fund-A-Need!

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Thank you to the following donors for their contributions of underwriting support, auction items and packages, and other support of the 2019 Auction.

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This report reflects gifts received between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. If any errors or omissions are noted, please accept our apologies and share them with the ACS Office of Development at development@averycoonley.org or 630.969.0800.



Group Six students exploring the tree climb experience at Camp Manitouqua.

Thank You

In 2018-2019, we said farewell to several faculty and staff members who retired. We wish them well and thank them for their service.



Morning music, cloister concerts, the occasional timpani in the wings of the PAC - these were all signs of **John Seger's** orchestra program here at ACS. Mr. Seger is a man of few words, but every syllable is filled with kindness. His actions extend beyond helping students; as a colleague, he was equally thoughtful. He shared his Meyer lemons from his Florida property each break, held doors with a gentleman's flair, and greeted everyone with genuine warmth. Over his 2 decades of service, John has touched the lives of hundreds of students! So the next time you find yourself humming an orchestral tune, see flute music blowing through the cloister, or a violin case, remember these are all signs of Mr. Seger and his love of music.



Nancy Ries taught at The Avery Coonley School beginning in 1991. She initially taught Kindergarten before being lured to Group 3 by Jean Snyder in 1994. Ms. Ries and Ms. Snyder worked together for 21 years, during which time they taught approximately 670 students. Ms. Ries was the essence of Group 3: she kept the pace of ACS learning and did it without rippling the water. She was an educator who taught and nurtured quietly, positively, and gently. She was always thoughtful and always kind. She consistently put children and their learning front and center. Her gentle spirit was impossible to miss. Her observations about children's growth and development were rooted in compassion and lead to constructive recommendations. While guiding children through research techniques and report writing, she modeled and taught persistence, patience, and positivity. And it turns out, these are the critical life lessons taught in Group 3. Ms. Ries made Group 3 a warm, welcome place to grow and stretch. The Avery Coonley School community thanks Ms. Ries for all she did for so many for so long. We wish her the very best on the next phase of her journey. She will be fondly and profoundly missed.



Jody Weidman embodied the qualities we hope to instill in our students: kindness, thoughtfulness, and empathy. She spent 26 years at ACS working diligently in the lunchroom, business office, the library and at the front desk. She brought her beautiful smile and positive attitude with her to work each and every day. Whether she was helping parents, listening to students, or talking with faculty, she made sure everyone felt heard, respected, and helped. On a daily basis, Jody channeled her motherly love to our students. It was a joy to see her light up when EC arrived to sing a song, or when she chatted with Kindergarteners at lunch. Mrs. Weidman was such a wonderful part of our team and our community and she will be dearly missed. We thank her for her years of service and are so grateful for all she's given to ACS!

New Board Members and Honorary Trustees

We'd like to welcome the following new members of the ACS Board of Trustees who have joined the board in 2019:

Julie Swinehart is a proud parent of three children including ACS Class of 2019 alum Brandon Hornickle, ACS Class of 2021 student Ben Hornickle, and Ben's twin sister Emma Hornickle who attends public school in La Grange. She and her wife Andrea Hornickle have served as ACS Parent Ambassadors and have actively supported ACS each year since joining the community, including during the Annual Auction. Professionally, Julie brings more than twenty years of business experience to the Board, including a depth of financial and real estate experience, and she currently serves as Chief Financial Officer of a publicly-traded real estate investment trust. She holds a B.S. in Accountancy from the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign and is a CPA. In her spare time, Julie enjoys traveling, spending time with friends and also with family – playing board and strategy games, completing puzzles, going on bike rides, and going for walks.

Lisa Vaughan's family joined the Avery Coonley School community in 2009 when her daughter, Britta, started in Group 2 and her daughter, Tate, started in JK. She has enjoyed serving alongside great parents and Avery Coonley teachers and administrators in a number of different capacities with the School. She served as one of the co-founders of the HSA Fun Run in 2010. Lisa was Silent Auction Chair in 2011 and Auction Co-Chair in 2012. She has been a room parent, has served for three years on the Marketing and Enrollment Committee and most recently served on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee of the Board. Her most enjoyable experience at ACS has been serving as an Admission Tour Guide for the past six years, sharing with perspective families the valuable and enriching experience her girls have had at ACS.



Ring of the bell in the cloister signals the start of a new school day.

Congratulations to the following Honorary Trustees who were recognized for their service and dedication to ACS.

John Grube joined the board in 1990 as both he and his wife Ann had always wanted to volunteer in different ways to support the school, and both of their children were enrolled at ACS. For John, one of the most important things parents can do for their children is provide them with an outstanding education, and ACS did precisely that. Even now, when he and his wife ask themselves “What explains the extraordinary lives of our children?” it often comes back to ACS. During his tenure as a Trustee, John served as Board Chair, was actively involved in numerous board committees, and led several fundraising initiatives for the School. In his personal life, John served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Chicago Zoological Society/Brookfield Zoo, a board member and former board chair at the American Red Cross of Greater Chicago, a trustee of the Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, Connecticut, and a trustee and treasurer of King Bruwaert House, a continuing care community in Burr Ridge. He is a graduate of Stanford (B.A.) and Harvard (M.B.A.).

Catherine Slark joined the Board in 1997 in order to support what she feels is a remarkable school with its dedicated faculty and staff, and felt it was an honor to serve as a Board member. Cathy believes in the exceptional education ACS provides for students to prepare them for higher education and, more importantly, to become positive, productive and respectful members of society. Cathy and her husband Martin have been steadfast advocates of the school for more than 25 years. Cathy served as Board Chair and was actively involved in several board committees during her tenure. Outside of ACS, Catherine is a native of Yorkshire in the north of England and holds a degree in Pharmacy from the University of Bath. In her free time she enjoys gardening, golfing, and walking.

New Faces at ACS

The following professionals joined the ACS Faculty, Administration, and Staff in 2018-2019. We're pleased to welcome them to ACS!

Jessica Kuczkowski joined ACS in 2019 as a Group 3 teacher. She has a B.A. in Elementary Education from North Central College and M.A. in Gifted Education from Northeastern Illinois University. Miss Kuczkowski has several years of experience teaching gifted students and also taught the last four years at Northwestern's Center for Talent Development for their Saturday and summer programs in grades Pre-K through 5th. Recently, Miss Kuczkowski has joined the administrative team at Dominican University's Summer Gifted and Talented program to continue her year round work with gifted children. In her spare time, Miss Kuczkowski loves to travel, lead a women's book club, and spend time outside.

Konrad Pawelek is a native of Poland where he completed his primary education. He immigrated to Chicago and completed a Bachelor of Music Education and a Master's in Music Pedagogy at Northeastern Illinois University. His professional experience includes teaching music, band, and choir at elementary and high schools in the Chicago area. In addition, Mr. Pawelek teaches Polish language, Geography and History at an evening elementary school for kids of Polish descent. He is an active musician in the Chicagoland area and directs a Polish Youth Wind Ensemble whose goal is to pass on Polish music and its traditions to new generations. In his free time he enjoys any farm-related activities, woodworking, pursuing his passion for history, and learning new languages.



The 2018–2019 staff of The Avery Coonley School.

Asna Qureshi joined the Avery Coonley staff in 2019. She has a B.S. from Northern Illinois University and M.S. from Aurora University. Prior to joining ACS, Ms. Qureshi taught at various private schools. She was also an adjunct professor at Aurora University, working with undergraduate students. Ms. Qureshi loves to incorporate technology in her lessons and teach students new ways to look at mathematics. Outside of school, Ms. Qureshi enjoys spending time with her husband and two girls. She loves hiking at national parks and baking with her girls.

Kirill Taranouchtchenko joined the faculty in 2019. He has a B.A. and M.A. in Secondary School Education from Moscow State Teachers Training University. Born in Riga, Latvia, Mr. Taranouchtchenko moved to Los Angeles, CA, in 1992 and taught World History, Cultural Diversity, and Ethics at Crossroads High School for Arts and Sciences in Santa Monica, CA from 1999 to 2017. In the summer of 2017, Kirill and his family moved to Chicago. In his spare time, Kirill enjoys reading non-fiction, watching ice hockey (his native Latvia's national sport) and traveling the world.

Angela Tufo joined the ACS community as the new Front Desk/Receptionist in 2019. For the past 15 years she's worked as the Office Manager and occasional Chairsides Assistant at an established dental office in Woodridge. Several years ago she was an administrative assistant at the Proviso Area for Exceptional Children, a special education school in Maywood. In her spare time she enjoys her workouts at OrangeTheory Fitness, walking, baking, spending time with her family, and paper quilling. She is a lover of chocolate, the Blackhawks, Las Vegas, and Disney.

Jennifer Youngblood joined the ACS faculty in 2019. She has a B.F.A. in Art and Design from Savannah College and M.A. in Teaching from Pacific University. She has taught elementary and middle school art and "out and about" service learning experiences. She's engaged in work such as Social Emotional Learning (SEL), arts curriculum review, encouraging team building among faculty and staff, workshops and presentations to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of other cultures and identities, marketing, mentorship, and professional development. Originally from Savannah, Georgia, Mrs. Youngblood moved to the Chicago suburbs from Connecticut with her husband, two young children, and not so young labrador retriever. She loves all things outdoors and spending time with family and friends.

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